



 Career Tools

Subject Selection Guide

June 2022

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Understanding Your Career Goals

The roadmap of life

Have you ever tried to plan out your career?

Before selecting subjects for your senior studies, creating Plan A, B and even C is a good idea to set you up for your transition out of school.

Think of it like planning a holiday.

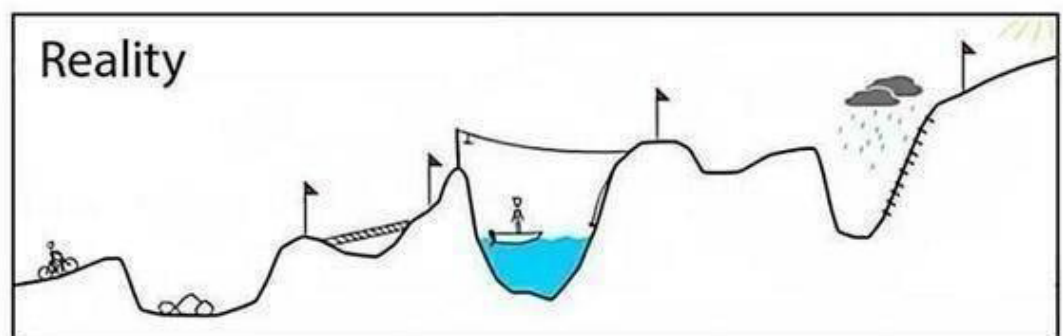
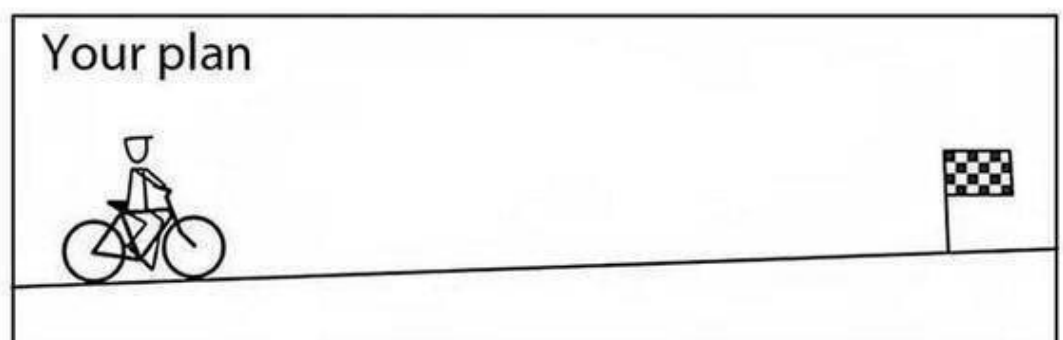
Before you leave for a holiday, you plan your journey and research the destination; how to get there, where you will stay and the activities you want to do. Along the way, plans can change. The theme park you wanted to go to might be closed- but it doesn't matter as you did your research and have a back up activity. This is the same concept for broader life, and more specifically, careers.

Although we can't predict the future or guarantee that life will go to plan, what we can do is map out your dream journey so there is something to follow. Developing a roadmap to your future gives you a sense of purpose by breaking down your aspiration into a set of achievable goals that act as stepping stones to your ultimate success and happiness.

You can expect your career plan to change as you evolve through your school years and beyond, and as new opportunities arise. Something you plan in year 7 may not be relevant to you in year 10, so as things change it is important to update your plan so you can keep on top of your ever changing roadmap.



Login to your school career website 'student secure area' to map your career plan.





Understanding Senior Secondary School

Senior Secondary School Certificate

School leaving age

Depending on which state of Australia you live, the school leaving age rules slightly vary. Seventeen (17) is the compulsory education age in most states of Australia. It is 17.5yrs - 18yrs for WA & TAS.

The general rule is that you **MUST** be in full time education, training or employment up until you are 17 year of age (17.5yrs - 18yrs for WA & TAS).

It is for this reason that many students decide to undertake the Senior Secondary School Certificate relevant to their state.

State assessment and curriculum bodies

Each state has a governing authority who set the requirements for achieving a Senior Secondary Certificate qualification and alternatives for year 11 and 12.

State/Territory	Curriculum and Assessment Authority	Award
ACT	<u>The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies</u>	Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC)
NSW	<u>NSW Education Standards Authority</u>	Higher School Certificate (HSC)
NT	<u>South Australian Certificate of Education</u>	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET)
QLD	<u>Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority</u>	Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)
SA	<u>South Australian Certificate of Education</u>	South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)
TAS	<u>Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification</u>	Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE)
VIC	<u>Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority</u>	Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)
WA	<u>School Curriculum and Standards Authority</u>	Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)
All		International Baccalaureate

Understanding Senior Secondary School

Pathways

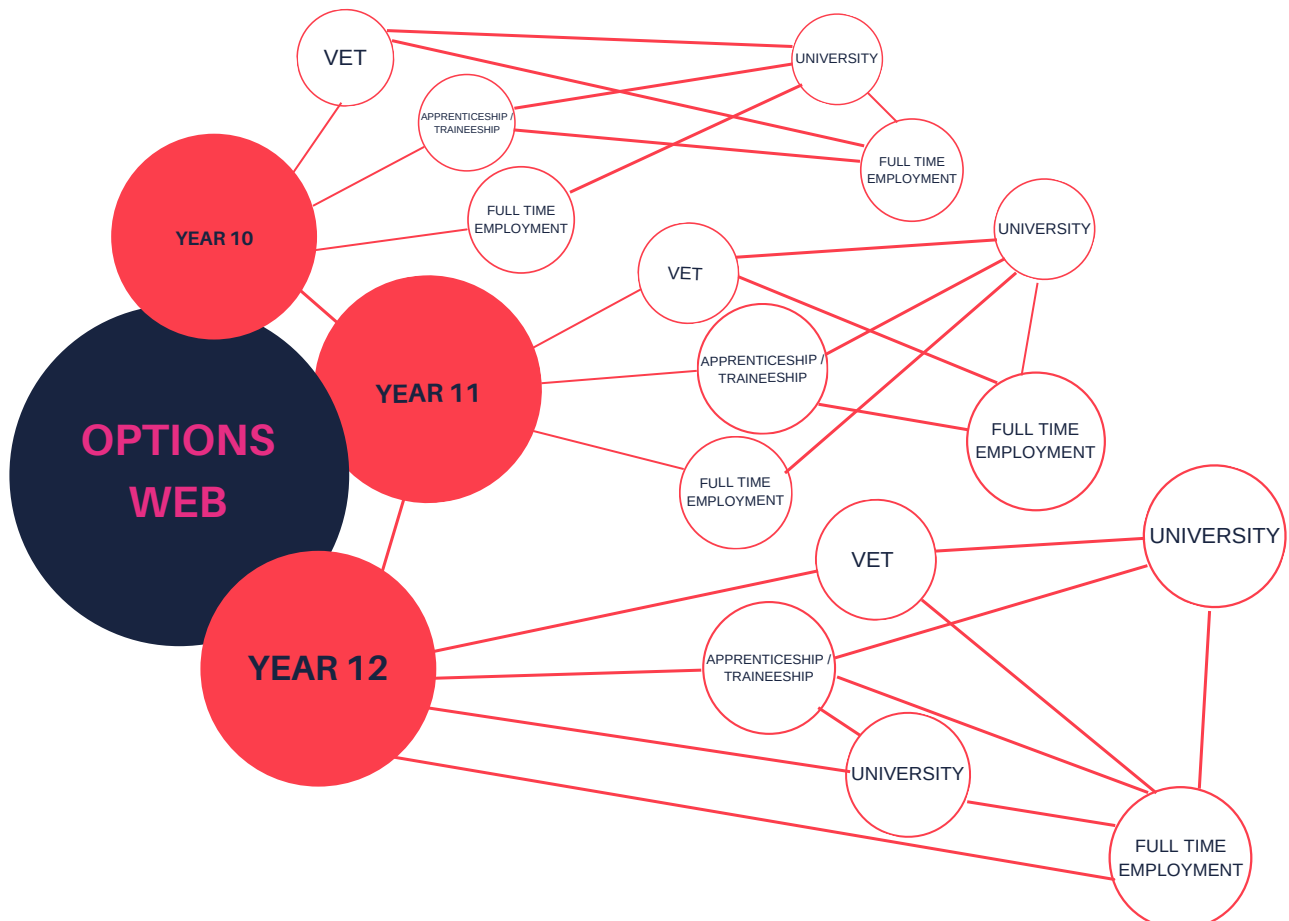
Some people know what they want to do from an early age, but many do not. Additionally, it is common for people to change their mind. For example, approximately 50% of any year 12 cohort will report a change of career plan within 6-12 months of finishing school.

For these reasons, it is important for you to know about many different pathways.

The VET sector in Australia provides nationally recognised training in industry-specific skills. There are many industries and qualification levels to choose from in the VET sector. VET courses can be completed in shorter time frames than university degrees. On average, VET graduates are employed faster and can even earn more money than some university graduates.

If you are thinking about TAFE as a pathway to university, a VET qualification can take time off a university degree, and in some cases make it cheaper!

Apprenticeships and traineeships are a blend of employment and vocational training where you undertake paid work while learning under the guidance of a training provider (e.g. TAFE) and your employer to complete a formal qualification. There are many industries and qualification levels to choose from in the VET sector. You can even start an apprenticeship or traineeship while you are at school! This is known as an SbAT (School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship).

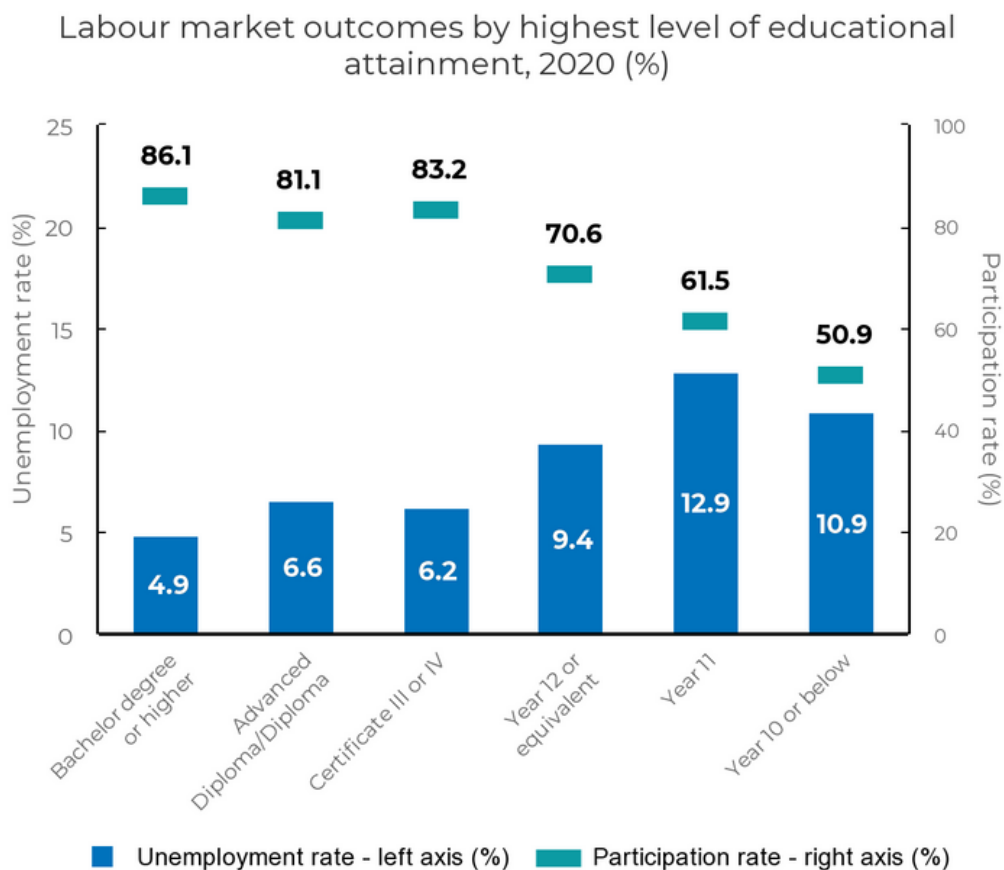


Understanding Senior Secondary School

University education helps you further your progression through the AQF and extends your employment options. It prepares you for a competitive job market and helps you become an expert in your field of passion. There are many higher education institutions across Australia, public and private, with many course options. You have access to many more early entry opportunities if you apply in year 12. Some courses have specific entry criteria such as auditions, portfolios, external testing and interviews.

If you find full-time employment without extra qualifications using your transferable skills, it will likely begin with entry level positions. Research shows that students studying beyond year 10 are more likely to find employment, earn a higher income and achieve promotions and pay rises.

Defence Forces and Emergency Services options have varying entry levels and age requirements. It is important to check the information relevant to your state



If there is one thing to keep in mind, it is this:

"People with higher level qualifications generally have better employment outcomes than those who have not completed further education after leaving school."

(National Skills Commission 2021)

Understanding Senior Secondary School

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank

ATAR Basics

If you are wanting to go to university straight after Year 12, it is recommended you gain an Australia Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR).








The ATAR is a number between 0.00 and 99.95 that indicates your position relative to other students. It is a rank, not a score or mark out of 100! So, an ATAR of 80.00 means that you are 20 per cent from the top of your cohort.

Universities use the ATAR to help them select students for their courses, and admission to most tertiary courses is based on your selection rank (your ATAR + any applicable adjustments).

Many universities also use other criteria when selecting students (eg: a personal statement, a questionnaire, a portfolio of work, an audition, an interview or a test).

Scaling

Scaling is a process based on a rigorous and unbiased mathematical model that allows a comparison to the performance of students in every possible combination of subjects. The data produced by scaling shows us how scores in one subject relate to scores in other subjects, enabling fair and accurate comparisons of student performance. The underlying principle of scaling is that you should be neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by choosing one combination of courses over another.

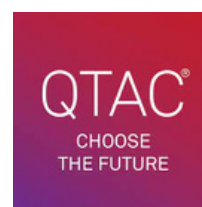
Myth	Fact
 <p>Some courses are always 'scaled up', therefore I should study those.</p> <p>-----</p>  <p>Some courses are always 'scaled down', therefore I should avoid those.</p>	 <p>The way a course is scaled depends entirely on the average academic performance of all the students doing that course that year – and it can change from year to year. For most courses, your scaled mark will be lower than your HSC mark. To get the best possible position and maximise your scaled marks, select the courses you'll do best in.</p>
 <p>I need to study 'hard' subjects to get high scaled marks.</p>	 <p>'Hard' is a subjective term. Everyone has different strengths and interests. Students who achieve an ATAR of 99.95 study a large variety of subjects.</p>
 <p>I should study Mathematics Standard 2 rather than Mathematics Advanced to get a better ATAR.</p>	 <p>It's very difficult to predict which course will lead to a higher scaled mark. Your scaled mark depends on the average academic ability of the students studying that course and your position in the course. When considering which maths course to study, remember that some university courses have prerequisites or assumed knowledge of Mathematics Advanced. It's important to choose the level of maths that best suits your plans for further study.</p>

Understanding Senior Secondary School

Tertiary Admission Centres by state

Each state has a corresponding admissions centre in charge of setting out the subject requirements you need to obtain an ATAR in consultation with the state curriculum and assessment authority. These two organisations share the responsibility of calculating your ATAR on behalf of the universities. Some of these responsibilities vary by state. Refer to your state's 'TAC' to further determine how your ATAR is calculated and how scaling works.

State/Territory	Tertiary Admission Centre	Information for year 10 students
ACT	<u>Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)</u>	https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/year-10-students
NSW	<u>Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)</u>	https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/year-10-students
NT	<u>South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)</u>	https://www.satac.edu.au/satac-publications
QLD	<u>Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC)</u>	https://www.qtac.edu.au/year-10-students/
SA	<u>South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)</u>	https://www.satac.edu.au/satac-publications
TAS	<u>University of Tasmania</u>	https://www.tasc.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Understanding-the-ATAR.pdf
VIC	<u>Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC)</u>	https://www.vtac.edu.au/before/guides/y10guide.html
WA	<u>Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC)</u>	https://www.tisc.edu.au/static-fixed/guide/slar-2024.pdf





Selecting Your Subjects

Prerequisites

Oxford Languages definition: a thing that is required as a prior condition for something else to happen or exist.

Some institutions have minimum entry requirements. This is to ensure that every program candidate has necessary base knowledge to be successful in that course. If you are looking at university, it is important to check the courses you are interested in for any prerequisites.

Sometimes institutions will also have 'assumed knowledge' or 'recommended studies'. These are different to prerequisites but is useful advice and suggestions to help you succeed.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Personalised by Domestic × Parent or guardian × Pathways ×

CAMPUS Gold Coast campus Nathan campus	DURATION 3 years full-time 6 years part-time ⓘ	COMMENCING IN Trimester 1, 2, 3	ENTRY REQUIREMENTS ATAR RANK ⓘ 65.00 OR VET qualification, Certificate III Prerequisites view all Any General or Applied English subject (Units 3&4, C) Assumed knowledge view all General Mathematics or Mathematical Methods (Units 3&4... Recommended view all One of Biology, Chemistry or Physics	FEE (INDICATIVE) \$6,500 per year ⓘ
CREDIT POINTS 240 ⓘ	DEGREE CODE 1634	QTAC CODE View QTAC requirements	GUARANTEED ADMISSION SCHEME	

Selecting Your Subjects

Key Considerations

As we have discussed, we know that life can throw unexpected things our way. Sometimes this is in the form of tragedy, sometimes it is opportunity. The best way to manage your roadmap is to consider the small goals required to achieve your Plan A at this point in time but also choose subjects that make you happy. Happiness is your pathway to success and balance is key to achieve this philosophy.

- Think carefully about your interests
- Be realistic about your abilities and skills
- Choose your courses at the appropriate level
- Check the prerequisites of any courses you are planning to study after completing school. If you are unsure of your career path, it may be wise to keep your options open.
- Consider whether you are choosing a subject for the right reason
- Seek advice and thoroughly research before committing

DO



Login to your school career website 'student secure area' to access your interests, skills and abilities tests. Don't forget the career investigator activity!

- ~~• Choose subjects based on what your friends are doing, what your older siblings or parents did~~
- ~~• Choose based on who you think might be teaching the subject~~
- ~~• Choose based on how you think a subject might get scaled~~

X DON'T

Selecting Your Subjects

Industry/Subject Matrix

Here is a rough guide of how your desired industry areas relate to your subject selections. Of course within each industry there are many occupations with differing requirements.

The best thing you can do is select a broad range of subjects that will support your Plan A, B and C as best as possible. It is important to note that many skills across these industries cross over, and with the many pathways available to you, this matrix is not the 'be all, end all'.

Click on the industry links in the table to find labour market insights.

	English	Maths	Sciences	Humanities	Technical and Applied	Health and Phys Ed	Creative Arts
Accommodation and Food Services	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Administrative and Support Services	✓	✓		✓			
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Arts and Recreation Services	✓			✓		✓	✓
Construction	✓	✓			✓		
Education and Training	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Electricity, Gas, Water, Waste	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Financial and Insurance Services	✓	✓					
Health Care and Social Assistance	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Information, Media and Telecommunications	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Manufacturing	✓	✓			✓		
Mining	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Other Services	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Public Administration and Safety	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	✓	✓		✓			
Retail Trade	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	✓	✓			✓		
Wholesale Trade	✓	✓		✓	✓		



Next Steps to Success

What Employers are Looking for

Personal Attributes

Your personal attributes are those traits that make you individual and are unique to you. Your personal attributes can be shaped by your values and beliefs, and occur naturally.

Examples are; loyalty, commitment, honesty, enthusiasm, reliability, personal presentation, common sense, resilience, motivation and adaptability.

Enterprise Skills

Enterprise skills are also known as transferable skills, soft skills or employability skills and are useful across many jobs. These skills enable young people to engage with a complex world and navigate the challenges they will inherit, and have been found to be a powerful predictor of longterm job success.

Examples are; communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self-management, learning, and technology.

Enterprise skills become useful for young people as they gain experience through paid work, unpaid work or hobbies and community involvement. Demonstrating your developing abilities to employers in the form of transferable skills will enable young people to progress through to different jobs.

Technical Skills

Technical skills are often specific to a particular task, role or industry. Technical skills include qualifications such as licences, certificates or degrees but also include skills acquired on-the-job that are specific to a role or industry. Such skills may include surgical procedures if you are a veterinarian, hair styling techniques if you are a hairdresser, or Javascript if you are a computer programmer.



Login to your school career website 'student secure area' to undertake an enterprise skills audit of yourself. Assess areas for improvement and see the next chapter on ways to build your enterprise skills for ultimate success.

Next Steps to Success

Strategies for Building Enterprise Skills

Casual jobs

Young people have to start their working life somewhere, usually in the form of casual opportunities after school or on weekends. They often lack on-the-job experience and need to utilise natural traits to attain entry level positions or their first job. It is common in this instance that an employer will request a work trial to see if you are a good fit for the business, willing to listen and willing to learn. It is from here that your enterprise skills will develop.

Work experience

You can't go wrong with work experience. You'll find out one of two things: you'll love it or you'll hate it. Either way is crucial information to find out before you commit yourself to a career path. Work experience will also help you to prove your enterprise skills on your resume or even that personal statement you might need to write in the near future. Seek information from your careers adviser for more information on how you can undertake work experience.

Volunteering

Lending your time as a volunteer creates many benefits to yourself and the community. Including volunteering in your resume will put you ahead of 70% of the other candidates who don't have volunteering experience (Deloitte, 2016).

Volunteering is fun, easy, and you can choose something that interests you. It shows you have initiative, adaptability, and determination to succeed. In a world where work experience is everything, volunteering is a great way to get practical experience to prove to employers that you're worth hiring.

Here's a few ideas:

- Sport clubs/coaching/refereeing
- Canteens
- Charity organisations/Op shops/Fundraising
- Religious groups
- Animal welfare
- Emergency services
- Surf life saving
- Tutoring
- Soup kitchens
- Aged care facilities
- Libraries
- Environmental conservation
- Remote/online opportunities



Next Steps to Success

Extra-curricula activities (internal and external of school)

Love sport? How about music? The activities and hobbies you participate in can also contribute to showing your enthusiasm, motivation and commitment, perfect attributes an employer or scholarship coordinator would look for.

Participate in as many extra-curricular activities as you can and without knowing you will develop skills like communication, teamwork, problem solving and creativity to write about in your resume, early entry or scholarship applications.

Short courses

Talk to your careers officer to ask for guidance about upcoming VET short courses in your area. You can also search the National Careers Institute's 'myskills' website by clicking on the below image. Short courses you could work toward attaining for the development of your technical skills include;

- General construction induction
- Provide first aid
- Responsible service of alcohol
- Prepare and serve espresso coffee
- Food hygiene and safety
- Infection prevention and control

The screenshot shows the 'myskills' website interface. At the top left is the National Careers Institute logo. The navigation bar includes 'Course Search', 'Training Provider Search', 'Career Info', 'Industries', 'More', 'VET Alumni', and 'Log Out'. The main heading is 'Course Search' with a breadcrumb 'Home / Course Search'. Below the heading are two yellow buttons: 'Learn more about JobTrainer' and 'Search for JobTrainer Courses'. A search bar contains the text 'Search courses or occupations...', a location field 'Enter a location...', a radius selector 'Within 25 km', and a 'Search' button. A status bar at the bottom indicates '7456 Courses found'.

Next Steps to Success

Developing a Career Portfolio

Gathering the following accounts and documents early on is going to help prepare you for the rest of your life. Please keep all your details in a safe and accessible place:

Identification documents

Locate as many of the following ID documents as possible. If you don't have enough, you may need to obtain some to enable creation of your accounts.

- Birth Certificate - if missing, new ones can be obtained online via the relevant state's 'Births, Deaths and Marriages' registry
- Photo ID - If you don't have a driver licence, consider applying for a photo card through your relevant state office
- Medicare Card - you can apply to be on your own medicare card at 15yrs
- Passport - not necessary but can come in handy if you might one day travel!

Bank Account

At age 14, you can open a bank account independently. There are many banking options so it is important to compare them online and find an account with no fees. You can then get a job and start saving!

Tax File Number (TFN)

TFNs are issued by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Your TFN is used to identify your tax records and is yours for life. Without it:

- your employer must take 47% of your wages in tax
- financial institutions are required to tax your interest at the highest marginal tax rate (currently 45%)
- Centrelink will generally not pay you an allowance such as - Youth Allowance, Newstart or Austudy
- you will not be able to defer your higher education fees

Applying for a TFN is quite simple.

Complete the [online form](#) then book your post office appointment. Ensure you take acceptable identification documents as listed [here](#).

myGov

Creating a myGov account is the first step to linking all of your online government services including Centrelink, Medicare, the ATO and more. If you are preparing to access financial support via youth allowance or a study allowance, you can create your [Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#) and prove your identity through myGov.



Next Steps to Success

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

Anyone undertaking any education and training with a provider outside the school system must have a Unique Student Identifier (USI).

This applies to:

- Vocational Education and Training - eg: study at Certificate or Diploma level through TAFE or other Registered Training Organisation (RTO's) or even short courses such as your Construction Induction or First Aid.
- Higher Education - eg: Degrees etc. through universities and other providers

This USI allows you to login to your training account and see all your VET training records and the results of all your courses. You can also print out all your results to take to an employer when you are applying for a job or to any training provider when you are doing any additional courses.

You must have this Unique Student Identifier before you can commence any courses. If you don't already have one, you can create one at www.usi.gov.au



Resume

A resume is a brief written account of your personal, educational, and professional qualifications and experience that is used to secure new employment. This document is requested by employers at the beginning of the job application process so they can select the most suitable candidates for the position to invite for an interview. Sometimes you will be required to submit a resume for scholarship or early entry applications. Your resume should be a working document and regularly updated.

Cover letters

A cover letter accompanies a resume and is tailored more closely to the specific position to which you are applying. The letter is an opportunity for you to highlight areas that you believe would make you a great fit in alignment with the company goals and stand out from the competition.

e-Portfolio

The e-Portfolio goes a step beyond the traditional resume and cover letter combination by allowing you to compile, organise and present the information and experiences you have gained on your journey through school and life through your own personal website. By helping you to gather, store, and organise information about yourself electronically, a digital portfolio will get you started on the journey to your dream job.

Next Steps to Success

Personal statements

A personal statement is a document all about you that is often asked for in early entry or scholarship applications. Sometimes, if you are applying to a special program you will also need to supply a personal statement.

Once you have a personal statement written, it is very easy to update and adapt to all of your future applications.

Here are the general areas that most personal statements will include:

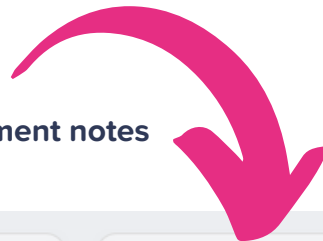
- Academic Achievements
- Leadership Experience/Qualities
- Communication/Teamwork Qualities
- Personal Attributes/Favourable Qualities
- Sporting Involvement/Achievements
- Community Participation/Involvement

Some people are natural all rounders but don't worry, you don't have to be good at everything. Try to demonstrate strength in at least three areas and pick an area to focus improvement on in the future.



Login to your school career website 'student secure area' to access your career portfolio, enabling you to create:

- **resumes**
- **cover letters**
- **e-Portfolios**
- **personal statement notes**



The screenshot shows a user interface for a school career website. At the top, there are four main navigation buttons: 'Career Plan' with a 'Start Plan' link, 'Career Investigator' with a 'Start Investigation' link, 'Career Portfolio (Resume, Cover Letter & e-Portfolio)' with a 'Start Portfolio' link, and 'My School Pages' with a 'View' link. Below these is a 'Career Journeys' section with a dark blue header and several colorful icons representing different activities. One activity, 'Learn About Myself', is expanded to show a description: 'Find out what makes you "you" and how this can shape what you do both now and in the world beyond school.' It includes a 'Start journey' button and a 'View activities' button. A progress indicator on the right shows '0 / 8' and the text 'Activities Complete' is partially visible at the bottom.